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American School
of Classical Studies
in Rome

A CAPITAL FROM THE TEMPLE OF JUPITER
CAPITOLINUS IN ROME

THE temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, an imposing ruin in the Middle Ages, later so completely disappeared from view that its very site was forgotten. To-day, however, the materials are being gradually recovered to enable us to picture the building to our imagination. Citations from classical authors, images on coins, sculptured reliefs, and sketches of reliefs now lost have been used to fill out the picture. Any fragment, therefore, that can be identified as belonging to the temple itself has special interest.

The first important identification was that of the substructure. In 1865 portions of ancient walls were discovered in the Caffarelli gardens by the Prussian minister Herr Schlözer and published by Comm. Rosa,¹ but the significance and importance of the discovery was not then properly understood. The excavations of 1875 and 1876, as interpreted by Lanciani and Jordan, established beyond a doubt that these walls constituted part of the substructure of the famous temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. Their Etruscan character is highly probable, since they are composed of local tufa blocks measuring about 0.32 m. × 0.60 m. × 0.70 m., and are set with "headers" and "stretchers" in alternate horizontal layers. Enough remains to show that they carried a triple row of columns for the *pronaos* and a row of columns for each of the *pteromata*. These substructures seem to date from the earliest foundation of the temple by the Tarquins and to have served the same purpose through the

¹ *Annali*, 1865, p. 382; *Mon. d. Inst.* VIII, tav. xxiii, 2.

successive restorations by Sulla, Augustus, Vespasian, and Domitian.

While of the substructure no inconsiderable portion still remains, the superstructure has disappeared and its place is occupied by the palace and gardens of the German Embassy. Possibly the palace walls contain much that survived the ravage of fire and the assaults of the Vandals. But what has become of the marble columns and entablature? The lime-



FIGURE 1. — STYLOBATE OF THE TEMPLE OF JUPITER CAPITOLINUS.

kiln, the marble-yard, and the sculptor's atelier may be to a large extent responsible for their disappearance, but it is not improbable that the Capitol hill itself and its surroundings still conceal important fragments. The means of reconstructing the columns, however, is already near at hand. A fragment of the base of one of these columns was recovered in the excavation of 1875 and placed in the garden of the German Institute.¹ It is unfortunately no longer there. Professor Petersen in-

¹ Jordan, *Topographie der Stadt Rom*, I, ii, p. 72, note 69.

formed me that it had been presented to the municipal government of Rome, but where it is at present I have been unable to discover. It is described as an Attic base, the form usually employed by the Romans for columns of the Ionic and Corinthian order. According to Professor Hülsen's recollection, this fragment exhibited little more than one torus and scotia. It was said to be of Pentelic marble. In the form of the mouldings we cannot be far wrong in assuming that this base differed little from the bases of the columns of the Temple of Vespasian.¹

Fragments of huge shafts of columns were discovered in the Caffarelli Gardens on November 7, 1875, and still exist in the small court behind the Sala Rotonda of the Conservatori Museum. The largest fragment is embedded in the wall which separates the Conservatori court from the German Embassy. It is of a fine Pentelic marble, white mottled with violet. The preservation of the shaft is not such as to make very exact measurements possible. The channellings, as well as I could judge, measure 0.180 m. in width; the arrises can be measured more exactly and are 0.045 m. wide. Thus the channellings, from centre to centre, measure 0.225 m. This is one centimetre less than the measurements taken by the architect Schupmann² in 1876. Assuming that the shaft had twenty-four channellings, its circumference at this point would be 5.40 m.; in other words, this drum of the shaft has at this point a diameter of about 1.72 m.

On March 12, 1897, the workmen who were engaged on the new road or pathway to the Via di Monte Tarpeo uncovered a fragment of an immense Corinthian capital. It was discovered in front of the new stables of the German Embassy, across the Via di Monte Tarpeo, directly opposite the doorway marked No. 32. It lay a little below the surface on the edge of the cliff, but had not rolled down. The place where the fragment was discovered was only a few yards from the platform of the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. The

¹ See Figure 3.

² *Annali*, 1876, p. 151.

material of the fragment is a fine Pentelic marble, now covered with a rust-colored patina. Owing to this covering I could not discover any of the violet veins which characterized the marble of the shaft. That the marble is Pentelic is an opinion shared also by Professor Lanciani and by Cav. Apollonj, the sculptor, who has a thorough knowledge of Greek and Italian marbles. The character of the marble points to a connection with the base and shaft, already noted, which have, on this ground mainly, been identified with the Pentelic columns of



FIGURE 2. — FRAGMENT OF A CORINTHIAN CAPITAL.

the final restoration of the temple by Domitian.¹ It is usually assumed that only Domitian's temple had columns of this quality of marble, whereas this is not a necessary conclusion from Plutarch's statement. In fact, if there be any foundation for the tradition of Sulla's having transported from Athens a column from the Temple of Zeus Olympius, the earliest as well as the latest restoration of the Temple of Jupiter may have been of Pentelic marble. It is, however, possible that Augustus or Vespasian used marble of some other

¹ Plutarch, *Poplic.* 15 : οἱ κίονες ἐκ τοῦ Πεντελῆσιν ἐτμήθησαν λίθου, κάλλιστα τῷ πάχει πρὸς τὸ μήκος ἔχοντες · εἶδομεν γὰρ αὐτοὺς Ἀθήνησιν.

sort. We naturally think of Carrara marble in this connection, for the native quarries began to be extensively used in the time of Augustus, and the employment of Greek marble by Domitian seems to have impressed Plutarch as a fact worthy of notice. There is still another supposition. Parian marble was extensively imported in the early Empire; in fact, the large fragments of a beautifully decorated architrave and of a cornice, which still lie on the Capitoline hill along the Via delle Tre Pile, are of Parian marble. Possibly the columns of the restoration by Augustus or Vespasian were of Parian marble. In any event, the fact that the fragment of a capital recently discovered is of Pentelic marble identifies it probably, though not necessarily, as belonging to Domitian's temple.

That this capital belonged to the Temple of Jupiter is substantiated not only by the site of the discovery and the quality of the marble, but also by its size, which is much too large for the columns of the other temples of the Capitol, but well suits shafts of this temple. The *calathus* or basket-like kernel of this capital has a diameter of 1.54 m. Measured from the surface of the lily in front to the surface of the lily on the opposite side of the capital, the diameter is 1.74 m. The upper diameter of the shaft cannot vary much in either direction from the diameter of the *calathus* of the capital. Now the fragment of a shaft in the Conservatori courtyard has, according to our calculation, a diameter of 1.72 m., and was therefore, in all probability, not a portion of the extreme summit of the shaft. If we assume, therefore, that the upper diameter of the shaft measures about 1.54 m., then the lower diameter would be about 1.84 m. That this was approximately the size of the lower diameter of the shaft might also be inferred from the calculated diameter of the base. Jordan informs us¹ that an architect estimated the base as having a diameter of 2.26 m. If we assume this to be the diameter of the upper torus, then the lower diameter of the column would be about 1.89 m. So we may infer that the fragment of the base was probably a

¹ *Topog.* I, ii, p. 72, note 69.

fragment of the upper torus, and that the fragment of a shaft in the Conservatori court was not from the summit, though from above the middle of the shaft. The total height of the column may be calculated as 18.211 m., divided as follows :

Height of base (including plinth) =	0.981 m.
Height of shaft =	15.057 m.
Height of capital =	2.173 m.

These dimensions we have derived from the lower diameter by assuming that the proportions of the column were similar to those of the Temple of Vespasian, the dimensions of which are given by Taylor and Creasy, *Architectural Antiquities of Rome*,¹ Vol. II, Plates lxxix-lxxxiii. The height of the fragment of the capital is about 0.63 m. If we assume that this represents from a third to a quarter of the total height of the capital, we should reach a similar estimate for the total height of the capital.

We have to consider, finally, the style of the capital. The acanthus leaves are so damaged as to give us little aid. The chief point of comparison is the lily or lotus flower that forms the central decoration. This is blocked out with great simplicity. Similar simplicity of outline and modelling of the lily will hardly be found in any Corinthian capital in Rome, except in the capitals of the Temple of Vespasian. This temple was erected to Vespasian by his son Domitian, and its columns and entablature seem to have undergone little alteration when the temple was restored by Severus and Caracalla.

We may, therefore, regard the capitals of Domitian's temple to Vespasian as our standard and guide for reconstructing the capitals of his Temple to Jupiter Capitolinus. What is more natural than that Domitian should have employed the same architect in each case?

In the drawing known as Ursinianus Vaticanus 3439 f. 83, published by Hülsen,² a corner capital of the temple of Jupiter is figured as having an eagle perched upon it. This device we meet with in all the capitals of the Portico of Octavia, and it

¹ From this work (Vol. II, pl. lxxx) is taken our Figure 3.

² *Röm. Mitth.*, 1889, p. 251.

seems possible that an architect of the time of Augustus may have introduced it here also as peculiarly appropriate to the temple of Jupiter. But the fragment of a capital discovered in March enables us to say that in Domitian's restoration an

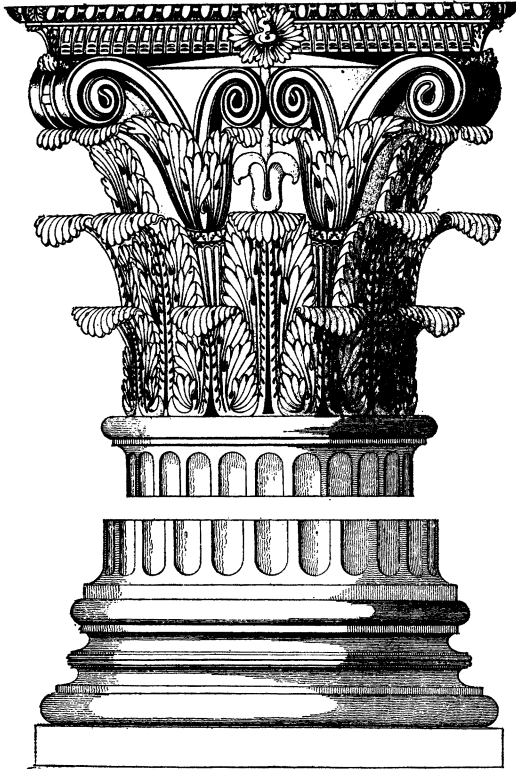


FIGURE 3. — CAPITAL OF THE TEMPLE OF VESPASIAN.

eagle could only have been retained in the corner capitals; it could not have figured on the front of a capital as it would have obliterated the central lily. The capitals, therefore, in all probability varied little in style from those of the Temple of Vespasian.

ALLAN MARQUAND.